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FOR AF/S, H, AND HA

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PREL, SHUM, PINS, OPRC, ZI
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY ON BISHOP MUZOREWA

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM SENATOR METZENBAUM OF OHIO WHICH FORWARDS A LETTER FROM A CONSTITUENT TO PRIME MINISTER MUGABE CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA. THE SENATOR'S LETTER STATES THAT "IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF SOMEONE WOULD LOOK INTO THIS MATTER AND ADVISE ME IF SOMETHING CAN BE DONE TO ASSIST." THE LETTER, DATED MARCH 26, WAS RECEIVED HERE APRIL 4. SUGGESTED REPLY IN PARA 3.

2. THE CONSTITUENT, MARGARET ALDRICH OF 385 MIDWAY BLVD, SUITE 305, ELYRIA, OHIO 44035, SIGNED HERSELF AS A MEMBER OF THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE, LAGRANGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. COPIES OF HER LETTER ARE MARKED FOR AMBASSADOR CHIPAMAUNGA; BISHOP JAMES AULT, SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS; BISHOP JAMES THOMAS, EAST OHIO CONFERENCE; DR. CLAIRE RANDALL; NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST; DR. JOHN HOLT, SEC-GEN OF THE UMC GENERAL CONFERENCE; THE WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL; SENATOR GLENN; REP. DONALD PEASE; AND PRESIDENT REAGAN. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF THE LETTER, DATED MARCH 9:

-- DEAR MR. MUGABE,

-- IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION THAT BISHOP ABEL T. MUZOREWA HAS BEEN HELD WITHOUT FORMAL CHARGES SINCE OCTOBER OF 1983. I WRITE IN DEEP CONCERN FOR MY FELLOW CHRISTIAN AND CHURCH LEADER. I HOPE AND PRAY THAT HE BE RELEASED SAFELY AND IMMEDIATELY TO FULFULL HIS ROLE AS LEADER OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE.
-- I ALONG WITH MEMBERS OF MY CHURCH, THE LAGRANGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, ARE WATCHING THE SITUATION VERY CLOSELY. PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT COPIES OF THIS LETTER ARE BEING SENT TO CHURCH AND GOVERNMENT LEADERS IN HOPES OF ENLISTING THEIR SUPPORT.

-- THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER.

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-- YOURS IN CHRIST,
-- MARGARET ALDRICH
-- MEMBER OUTREACH COMMITTEE
-- LAGRANGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
-- END TEXT.

3. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PROPOSED RESPONSE TO SENATOR METZENBAUM, WHICH WE BELIEVE DEPARTMENT SHOULD SEND DIRECTLY TO HIM IN THE INTERESTS OF TIMELINESS. (IF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THIS TEXT ARE MADE, PLEASE ADVISE.)

-- DEAR SENATOR METZENBAUM,

-- I AM REPLYING TO YOUR LETTER OF MARCH 26, CONCERNING THE STATUS OF BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA, IN THE PLACE OF AMBASSADOR KEELEY, WHO DEPARTED POST ON REASSIGNMENT IN FEBRUARY.

-- BISHOP MUZOREWA, IN ADDITION TO BEING THE HEAD OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE, IS THE LEADER OF THE UNITED AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (UANC) AND WAS PRIME MINISTER OF ZIMBABWE-RHODESIA, AS IT THEN WAS, FROM 1978-79. IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF FEBRUARY 1980, THE UANC WON THREE SEATS IN ZIMBABWE'S PARLIAMENT, AND ONE OF THOSE SEATS IS HELD BY BISHOP MUZOREWA.

-- IN OCTOBER 1983, BISHOP MUZOREWA RETURNED TO ZIMBABWE FROM A TRIP WHICH INCLUDED VISITS TO ZAIRE AND TO ISRAEL (WITH WHICH THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE HAS NO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS). ON HIS RETURN, HE MADE CERTAIN REMARKS CRITICAL OF THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT LED BY PRIME MINISTER MUGABE. HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY DETAINED BY THE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE EMERGENCY POWERS (LAW AND ORDER MAINTENANCE) REGULATIONS, WHICH PROVIDE THAT A PERSON MAY BE DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL IF HE IS BELIEVED TO REPRESENT A THREAT TO PUBLIC ORDER OR SAFETY.

-- IN THE WEEKS IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS DETENTION, SEVERAL FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES OF THE BISHOP, INCLUDING AMERICAN CHURCH LEADERS, ATTEMPTED TO SEE HIM AND TO SECURE HIS RELEASE. AMBASSADOR KEELEY AND OTHERS IN THIS EMBASSY FACILITATED THEIR EFFORTS WHENEVER POSSIBLE, AND MADE CLEAR TO ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT

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FOR AF/S, H, AND HA

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OFFICIALS THE UNITED STATES' ABHORRENCE OF DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL.

-- BISHOP MUZOREWA REMAINS IN DETENTION. THE DETENTION REVIEW TRIBUNAL, WHICH IS OBLIGED TO REVIEW THE CASES AGAINST DETAINEES, HAS MET IN HARARE AND HEARD EVIDENCE CONCERNING THE BISHOP. ALL HEARINGS ARE CONDUCTED IN CAMERA AND THE FINDINGS ARE NOT PUBLISHED, BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT WILL ABIDE BY THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRIBUNAL. THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE EXPECTED AT ANY TIME.

-- THE EMBASSY CONTINUES TO FOLLOW CLOSELY THE

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SITUATION OF BISHOP MUZOREWA. THE GOVERNMENT OF
ZIMBABWE IS AWARE OF OUR CONCERNS IN THIS REGARD.

-- SINCERELY, E. GIBSON LANPHER, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES,
A.I.
END TEXT. LANPHER
END OF MESSAGE CONFIDENTIAL

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